

## UPDATE 2000: Good News from Paris

By Jan Uhde

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Reflecting upon the current situation of world cinema, one can hardly get away from the gloomy news and dark predictions hailing from all directions: decline of national productions and cinema culture in general, Hollywood domination, style homogenisation - in other words, the end of cinema, the Millennium...

Occasionally, however, good news comes our way, too. This time from France - where the legendary Cinémathèque, founded in 1936 by Henri Langlois and currently housed in the Palais de Chaillot in Paris, will soon be moving to new premises in the 12<sup>th</sup> arrondissement (the former American Centre near Bercy), together with the Film library (BIFI) situated today near the Bastille. The Cinémathèque's new home, *Maison du cinéma*, designed in 1994 by the renowned architect Frank Gehry (he has built the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao) is supposed to receive its new tenant in the year 2000.

Situated in a popular quarter now in a process of rapid transformation, with the massive Bibliothèque nationale just opposite, the Marin Karmitz' new MK2 cinemas and the UGC Bercy multiplex nearby, this remarkable and fairly spacious building (10,500m<sup>2</sup>, or about 120,000 sq ft) might well be the millennium wish-come-true for the movie buff and the film-loving public alike. It will integrate the Museum Henri Langlois, a library and a mediatheque, three cinemas (one of them with 500 seats), exhibition space, study and pedagogical activities areas as well as a restaurant.

Film today involves much more than a traditional theatrical projection: therefore, the new facilities will also include an Internet linkup to all the other cinémathèques in France. Total cost of the project is estimated at over 200 million FF (ca 36 million USD). Maybe time for a bottle of Champagne?

At present, the French Cinémathèque includes the Museum of Henri Langlois with its exceptional collection of costumes, decor, apparatus, posters and photographs which illustrate film's history. The Cinémathèque's archives house 17,000 models of decor and design, 15,000 scripts and manuscripts, 30,000 posters, 6,000 magic-lantern plates. Its library contains 25,000 works and its photo-library has two million photographs. The Cinémathèque publishes or co-publishes original texts, biographies and rare works, as well as a semi-annual journal of history and aesthetics of film.

### Author Information

Jan UHDE is Professor Emer. (Film Studies) at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Born in Brno, Czech Republic. Graduated (MA) from the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno; PhD received at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. He taught at the University of Waterloo (1970-2012) where he founded a General and Honours BA program in Film Studies at the Department of Fine Arts.

Publications: *Latent Images: Film in Singapore* Second edition, with Yvonne Ng Uhde (Ridge Books, National University Press of Singapore, 2010); *Latent Images: Film in Singapore*, with Yvonne Ng Uhde (Oxford University Press, 2000); *Latent Images: Film in Singapore CD-ROM* (2003, co-author); *Vision and Persistence: Twenty Years of the Ontario Film Institute* (University of Waterloo Press, 1990) and *Ontario Film Institute Programming Activities Index 1969-1989* (Toronto: Ontario Science Centre, 1990). He co-edited the *Place in Space: Human Culture in Landscape* (Proceedings from the Second International Conference of the Working Group "Culture and Landscape" of the International Association of Landscape Ecology, Pudoc Scientific Publishers, Wageningen, Holland, 1993). Jan Uhde has published articles and reviews in several countries (including Canada, USA, Germany, Italy), participated in international juries at film festivals and presented papers at international conferences in North America and Europe. In 1998/99, he was a visiting researcher at the School for Film and Media Studies, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore.

His professional and research interests focus on Singapore cinema; the identification and distancing mechanisms of the film viewer; the non-authored modifications and manipulation of films; and specific aspects of film history, including the Central European cinema.

He founded KINEMA in 1993.